

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

Claim 1 (canceled)

Claim 2 (currently amended) The polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7 produced by the process of cloning using as a primer a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 21.

Claim 3 (previously presented) The polynucleotide according to claim 2 wherein said primer has the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 22.

Claim 4 (canceled)

Claim 5 (currently amended) The polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7 encoding a protein, which polynucleotide hybridizes with a nucleotide sequence encoding the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 21 or all of the nucleotide sequence encoding any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6 under the condition of 5 x SSC and 50°C, and which protein transfers an aromatic acyl group to flavonoid.

Claim 6 (currently amended) The polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7 encoding a protein, which polynucleotide hybridizes with a nucleotide sequence encoding the

amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 21 or all of the nucleotide sequence encoding any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6 under the condition of 2 x SSC and 50°C and which protein transfers an aromatic acyl group to flavonoid.

Claim 7 (currently amended) ~~The polynucleotide according to claim 1~~ An isolated polynucleotide encoding an anthocyanin acyltransferase, encoding a protein which consists of an amino acid sequence which is at least 30% homologous to any one of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6, and which transfers an aromatic acyl group to flavonoid wherein said acyltransferase transfers an aromatic acyl group to the glucose of the 3 or 5 position of anthocyanin.

Claim 8 (currently amended) The polynucleotide according to claim 1 encoding a protein which has an amino acid sequence having a homology of at least 69% with any of the amino acid sequences of SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6, and which transfers an aromatic acyl group to flavonoid.

Claim 9 (currently amended) A vector comprising ~~[[a]]the~~ polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~ claim 7.

Claim 10 (currently amended) A host cell transformed with ~~[[a]]the~~ vector according to claim 9.

Claim 11 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]The~~ host cell according to claim 10 wherein said host is a microbial or animal cell.

Claim 12 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The host cell according to claim 10 wherein said host is a plant cell or a plant body.

Claims 13-19 (canceled)

Claim 20 (currently amended) A method for acylating a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing a polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~claim 7 into the plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant.

Claim 21 (canceled)

Claim 22 (currently amended) A method for stabilizing a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~claim 7 into a plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which acylation stabilizes said pigment in the plant.

Claim 23 (currently amended) A method for altering the color of flowers, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to ~~claim 1~~claim 7 into a plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which acylation alters the color of flowers of said plant.

Claim 24 (previously presented) The method according to claim 20 wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claim 25 (currently amended) A plant, a progeny, or tissue of said plant or said progeny, tissues thereof, each of whose color has been altered by introducing thereinto ~~[[a]]~~the polynucleotide according to claim 1.

Claim 26 (canceled)

Claim 27 (currently amended) A cut flower of the plant or the ~~plants~~ plant's progeny according to claim 25.

Claim 28 (previously presented) An isolated polynucleotide encoding an anthocyanin acyltransferase, which polynucleotide encodes an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of the amino acid sequences as set forth in SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6, or hybridizes with a nucleotide sequence complementary to a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of the nucleotide sequences encoding the amino acid sequences as set forth in SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6 under the condition of 5 x SSC and 50°C or the condition of 2 x SSC and 50°C, and which anthocyanin acyltransferase transfers an aromatic acyl group to flavonoid.

Claim 29 (currently amended) A vector comprising ~~[[a]]~~the polynucleotide according to claim 28.

Claim 30 (currently amended) A host cell transformed with ~~[[a]]~~the vector according to claim 29.

Claim 31 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The host cell according to claim 30 wherein said host is a microbial or animal cell.

Claim 32 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The host cell according to claim 30 wherein said host is a plant cell or a plant body.

Claim 33 (currently amended) A method for acylating a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing ~~[[a]]~~the polynucleotide according to claim 28 into the plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant.

Claim 34 (previously presented) A method for stabilizing a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to claim 28 into a plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which acylation stabilizes said pigment in the plant.

Claim 35 (previously presented) A method for altering the color of flowers, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to claim 28 into a plant, whereby said polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which alters the color of flowers of said plant.

Claim 36 (currently amended) A plant, a progeny or tissues thereof, each of whose color has been altered by introducing thereinto ~~[[a]]~~the polynucleotide according to claim 28.

Claim 37 (previously presented) The plant tissue according to claim 36 wherein said tissue is a flower.

Claim 38 (previously presented) A cut flower of the plant according to claim 36 or its progeny having the same property.

Claim 39 (previously presented) The method according to claim 33, wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claim 40 (previously presented) The method according to claim 34, wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claim 41 (previously presented) The method according to claim 35, wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claims 42-53 (canceled)

Claim 54 (previously presented) An isolated polynucleotide encoding an anthocyanin acyltransferase, which polynucleotide encodes an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of the amino acid sequences as set forth in SEQ ID NOs: 1 to 6.

Claim 55 (currently amended) A vector comprising ~~[[a]]~~the polynucleotide according to claim 54.

Claim 56 (currently amended) A host cell transformed with ~~[[a]]~~the vector according to claim 55.

Claim 57 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The host cell according to claim 56, wherein said host is a microbial or animal cell.

Claim 58 (currently amended) ~~[[A]]~~The host cell according to claim 56, wherein said host cell is a plant cell ~~or a plant body~~.

Claim 59 (currently amended) A method for acylating a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to claim 54 into a plant, whereby said ~~gene~~polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which alters the color of flowers of said plant.

Claim 60 (currently amended) A method for stabilizing a pigment in a plant, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to claim 54 into a plant, whereby said ~~gene~~polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which stabilizes the pigment of said plant

Claim 61 (currently amended) A method for altering the color of flowers, comprising introducing the polynucleotide according to claim 54 into a plant, whereby said ~~gene~~polynucleotide expresses a protein, and said protein acylates the pigment in the plant, which alters the color of flowers of said plant.

Claim 62 (currently amended) A plant, its progeny, or tissue of said plant or said progeny, wherein its whose color has been controlled by introducing thereinto ~~[[a]]the~~ polynucleotide according to claim 54, ~~or its progeny having the same property, or tissues thereof.~~

Claim 63 (canceled)

Claim 64 (previously presented) A cut flower of the plant, its progeny, or tissue of said plant or said progeny according to claim 62 ~~or its progeny having the same property.~~

Claim 65 (previously presented) The method according to claim 60, wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claim 66 (previously presented) The method according to claim 61, wherein the pigment is anthocyanin.

Claim 67 (new) The host cell according to claim 56, wherein said host cell is a plant cell in a plant.